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**SUBJECT:** EVENING PARKING CHARGES  
**DATE:** 11 JULY 2013  
**RECIPIENT:** OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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1. This report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) with a summary of the Cabinet report relating to establish a new policy that allows evening parking charges to be implemented. The cabinet report also seeks approval to allow a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to be advertised and determined.

**BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:**

2. Evening parking charges are required to allow the Council to cover its costs in operating an evening parking service and to promote sustainable modes of transport. The evening economy places specific demands on managing car parking. The council provides a number of parking related services to support the evening economy and local residents. Among other things it includes:
  - CCTV monitoring;
  - Enforcement;
  - Cleansing and maintenance of car parks;
  - Lighting;
  - Maintaining the roads, parking restrictions and signs.
3. A consultation was publicised through street notices, on the web and in the Daily Echo. Responses were collated through the consultation page on the city web in the form of questionnaire. It was divided into three parts, A B and C. There were 487 responses to the questionnaire on the city web (68% were in Southampton and 38% were outside), including paper questionnaires received and input on behalf of the respondents.
4. The aim of Part A of the questionnaire was to establish preferences over the period and tariff type that could apply to on-street and off-street evening charges in the pay & display zone in the city centre. Of the 337 preferences 92% were in favour of Option 3 which was to extend parking charges till 8pm only. From consideration of the comments these preferences were subject to qualification:
  - 73% of respondents to the overall questionnaire were opposed to evening parking charges in principle;
  - The primary concern was over the cost of parking and affordability;
  - 7% of respondents highlighted concerns over the impact for residents and their visitors;
  - 6% of respondents highlighted concerns over the impact of community services (e.g. charities, faith centres and societies);
  - 28% of respondents highlighted concerns over the impact on the economy of the city centre (e.g. business and leisure facilities).

5. The aim of Part B of the questionnaire was to see whether there would be public support for reducing the charge for permits to park overnight in the car parks from £250 to £150. Of the 445 preferences made 65% were in favour of reducing the charge.
6. The aim of Part C of the questionnaire was to see whether there would be public support for extending the maximum parking period to two hours. Of the 451 preferences, 85% were in favour of this extension. 25 respondents highlighted opposition to the increase on the basis of the shortage of parking or a 1 hour stay being sufficient.
7. There has been support from public transport operators. Bluestar/Uni-Link buses have responded to the consultation by saying they *"would be happy to support this proposal with special discounted fares in conjunction with any planned introduction of these parking charges on a commercial basis to help show people there is a good and frequent and long standing commercial evening bus service already"*.
8. The results of the consultation will inform the design of the evening parking charges scheme. Whilst the report recommendation delegates the details of the scheme to be determined by the Head of Transport, Highways and Parking, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport it is expected that the scheme to be advertised in a TRO will include the following:
  - That charges will apply to 8pm only on street and until midnight in car parks;
  - The charge will only be £2 to reflect concerns about the affordability of parking and to the introduction of a flat fee of £2 will make the system easier to understand and enable people to not clock-watch whilst enjoying the evening economy;
  - The charge will be a flat rate. This is to reflect the different demands of the night time economy when compared to the daytime e.g. the need to dwell longer to enjoy the city centres leisure offer rather than feel pressured to return back to a vehicle at a certain time.
9. In addition, a number of associated measures are being considered to address some concerns raised about the evening economy and affordability. These include:
  - For residents and visitors the cost of an overnight parking season ticket for all city centre car parks will be reduced from £250 to £150.;
  - A NEW all day and weekend residents season ticket offer for designated city centre car parks will be developed;
  - A limited number of parking permits/vouchers will be made available to charities and voluntary organisation for them to distribute amongst their members. A system will be set up to administer the process;
  - We will work with public transport operators to provide a new and enhanced evening bus ticket offer;
  - Concern about extending the red zone permitted length of stay to 2 hours will be addressed as part of a review of existing parking zone boundaries to be conducted next year.

## **RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

### **Resource**

10. The one-off implementation costs are expected to be £30,000. There are unlikely to be other significant operating costs, as the cost of enforcement is already included within existing approved revenue budgets. .

### **Policy**

11. The report requires an amendment to the Strategic Level Parking Policy (previously approved by Cabinet on the 17 March 2008) to allow the establishment of the principle of charging for evening parking charges. Evening parking charges are also compliant with the Local Transport Plan and previously agreed parking policy on the basis that it:
- Ensures that the parking service covers its costs of operation; and
  - Encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the Local Transport Plan and reduces the level of carbon emissions from transport.

### **Financial**

12. The General Fund revenue budget, approved by Council in February 2013, included income from evening parking charges of £300,000 in 2013/14 and then £500,000 per annum in a full year. As this is a new parking policy it is difficult to gauge the public response. However, it is currently estimated that the additional income from the proposal set out in this report will be £200,000 in a full year. The implementation date is expected to be the start of October 2013, giving a net income projection, after one-off costs, of £70,000 in 2013/14.

### **Legal**

13. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 permits the introduction of the parking charges as set out in this report in accordance with a statutory consultation procedure set down in the Act and associated secondary legislation.

### **OPTIONS and TIMESCALES**

14. The proposal could be implemented by 1 October 2013, subject to Cabinet approval and the TRO determination.

### **Appendices/Supporting Information:**

15. None.

### **Further Information Available From:**

**Name:** Frank Baxter

**Tel:** 023 8083 2079

**E-mail:** Frank.baxter@southampton.gov.uk